

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 H-02 SS-15 NSC-05 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 PRS-01 /041 W

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R 120948Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3269

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 6364

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, RP

SUBJECT: BENIGNO AQUINO

REF: A. STATE 108940

B. STATE 109656

1. AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED AQUINO ISSUE AT LENGTH WITH DEFENSE SECRETARY PONCE ENRILE AND EXECUTIVE SECRETARY MELCHOR MAY 11. THEY INDICATED GOVERNMENT VERY MUCH ALIVE TO ISSUE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR PHILIPPINES, AND KEEN ON RESOLVING IT. PONCE ENRILE HAS APPARENTLY ACQUIRED BASIC RESPONSIBILITY FOR HANDLING ISSUE FOR GOVERNMENT, A GOOD CHOICE SINCE HE COMMANDS RESPECT ON AQUINO SIDE AS WELL. ALTHOUGH NO SOLUTION AT HAND, GOP APPARENTLY LEANING IN FAVOR OF EXILE BUT PREFERABLY TO AUSTRALIA WHERE LIKELY AQUINO POLITICAL AGITATION WOULD DO LESS HARM THAN IN U.S. IN MEANTIME, ACCORDING PONCE ENRILE, AQUINO HAS BEGUN TO TAKE MILK. EMBASSY WILL ATTEMPT TO CONFIRM.

2. AMBASSADOR ALSO LEARNED THAT AQUINO FAMILY HAS ASKED FORMER JUSTICE FERNANDEZ, OLD FRIEND OF AQUINO AS WELL AS MARCOS, TO SERVE AS INTERMEDIARY. FERNANDEZ HAS AGREED TO DO SO. REQUEST GENERATED BECAUSE ARCHBISHOP WILL BE AWAY FOR SEVERAL WEEKS AND EVIDENTLY DISAPPOINTED FAMILY WISHES. FERNANDEZ TOLD AMBASSADOR HE WOULD KEEP US INFORMED OF PROGRESS.

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3. AQUINO FAMILY WAS ADVISED BY EMBASSY OF COHEN INVITATION

TO AQUINO. FAMILY WAS PLEASED BUT CURIOUS AS TO
WHO IN U.S. MIGHT BE BEHIND INVITATION. WE DO NOT ANTI-
CIPATE ANY REACTION FROM MARCOS, ESPECIALLY IF GOP WOULD
RATHER SEE AQUINO GO TO AUSTRALIA.

4. COMMENT: ASSUMING AQUINO SURVIVES THE NEGOTIATING
PROCESS, THESE ARE FIRST CONCRETE SIGNS THAT STEPS ARE NOW
BEING TAKEN ON BOTH SIDES TO RESOLVE PROBLEM IN FILIPINO
MANNER.
SULLIVAN

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TRIALS, EXILES, CIVIL DISORDERS, JUDGES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: RowellE0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MANILA06364
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750165-0598
From: MANILA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750561/aaaacdjt.tel
Line Count: 71
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 108940
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: RowellE0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 JUL 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <19 NOV 2003 by RowellE0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BENIGNO AQUINO
TAGS: PINS, OEXC, RP, AS, EAST ASIAN LEGAL CENTER, (AQUINO, BENIGNO), (ENRILE, PONCE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006